

NOTES

HADDENHAM: *Fragment of Wall-painting*. During repairs to the roof of St. Mary's Parish Church in 1951, when the former slate covering was replaced with tiles, two fragments of wall-painting were found on the small area of original plaster between the upper part of the early-nineteenth-century coved plaster ceiling and the wall-plate of the fourteenth-century timber roof above it.

The first was on the North side, at the East end, adjoining the chancel arch wall. It represented a figure blowing a trumpet, and almost certainly was one of the usual angels shown in paintings of the Doom, or Last Judgment. This was evidently a case of the subject overflowing from the wall above the chancel arch on to the North and South walls of the Nave.

From information kindly provided by the Vicar, the Rev. W. W. J. Taylor, and our member, Mr. Walter Rose, the painting seems to have been on an elaborate scale, as traces of a good green pigment, and gold, were found. Only two instances of the use of gold in a wall-painting are recorded in Bucks.—the Doom at Winslow, unusually placed on the North aisle wall, and the almost obliterated St. Christopher at Chesham, equally



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PLATE 5. TYTHROP HOUSE. Staircase with scroll balustrade



Photo by courtesy of Mrs. H. G. Matthews

PLATE 6. DUNDRIDGE FARM, Wall-drawing on plaster above fireplace

unusually placed at the East end of the South aisle. In the latter case gold is also associated with green. Both these paintings are of late-fifteenth-century date; and by analogy the Haddenham fragment is probably coeval.

There were traces of colour at another point farther West on the same wall; and all the indications are that this church was exceptionally elaborately painted. The chancel still retains extensive remains of its thirteenth-century scheme of masonry pattern and ornament.

DUNDRIDGE: *Domestic wall-painting.* Through the good offices of our member, Mr. Weatherhead, Mr. H. G. Matthews has kindly sent photographs and particulars of a discovery made at his house at Dundry, near St. Leonard's Church, formerly in Aston Clinton parish. The house is listed as item No. 5, under Aston Clinton, in *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Bucks., South*, volume, p. 21.

Beneath panelling over a large open fireplace in one of the ground-floor rooms, remains of a drawing were found on the plaster between the wooden lintel of the fireplace and the ceiling beam. A man and a woman are represented, apparently holding each other by the hand. The scale of the figures is quite small, and there is no colour. The man, on the right, is in pointed doublet, with puffed sleeves, and possibly breeches, or long hose. He has a large ruff, and wears a hat with a feather in it. He has a sword, and possibly a dagger, and there are apparently elaborate garters, or rosettes, at the knees. The figure of the woman is a good deal defaced, but she seems to wear a deep and long pointed stomacher, hooped skirt, and very wide sleeves. There seems to be a high upstanding ruff and some kind of elaborate head-dress, or hair style, with feathers. All the details suggest an Elizabethan date, late in the sixteenth or early in the seventeenth century.

The work is crude and in the barest outline, and it is difficult to suggest any satisfactory interpretation. Whether it was a rough sketch for some scheme of painting never carried out, or whether a mere whim or 'scribble', one will never know. Nor can one suggest whom the figures represent, unless it be intended for Elizabeth and one of her courtiers. One can see no Biblical connexion, though it is common to find Old Testament scenes with the figures in Elizabethan costume (i.e. Chalfont St. Peter; and the Savoy, Denham). At any rate, it must have been quite early covered with panelling, and is now once more concealed. It is somewhat reminiscent of the rough drawings on the slope of the attic ceiling in a house in Amersham next the old Grammar School building, recorded by the late Mr. F. W. Reader in *Arch. Journ.*, LXXXIX (1933), page 130, plates III and IV, and *Records of Bucks.*, XII, 373, and plates II and III. The Dundry example seems earlier and is more importantly placed over the centre of the fireplace.

Mr. Matthews kindly supplied the accompanying photograph (plate 6).

STANTONBURY: *Destruction of old Parish Church of St. Peter, Stanton Low.* Attention was called in these Notes in 1948 (p. 144) to the deplorable state of affairs at this place, and the suggestion made that steps should be taken to make the roof watertight, and to board up the windows to prevent the entrance of vandals, which could have been done at a small cost. Nothing was done; and matters have gone from bad to worse, despite the efforts of Mr. L. R. Muirhead to bestir several bodies who should have been interested. The church is now a ruin and will soon go the way of Stoke Mandeville and Quarrendon.

The Rev. Harold Fellows, appointed Vicar of New Bradwell in July 1951, reports the bell stolen, the wall tablets hacked down, and other damage done. With the Bishop of Oxford's consent, Mr. Fellows has had the twelfth-century chancel arch and other features removed, and plans to re-erect them in connexion with a scheme for a Sacristy at St. James's, New Bradwell, costing a minimum of £200. One cannot but regret this precipitate action, and the fact that the Society or some of its members were not consulted. The money spent on demolition, carting away, and re-erection of isolated features, could surely have been better spent on preserving these things, and the whole building, *in situ*.

IVER HEATH: *Find of Fourteenth-century Paving-tiles.* Mr. Beverley Harrison reports the discovery of a number of fourteenth-century encaustic floor tiles, during alterations to a fireplace in his house—'Marfords,' Slough Road, Iver Heath. The house itself is of no great age, though reputedly on the site of an earlier one, and the presence of the tiles, built into the hearth and back and sides of the chimney breast, is inexplicable. It is thus unfortunately impossible to ascertain their original position or provenance. They might have come from any of the neighbouring churches (Iver, in which parish the house formerly stood, Denham, Fulmer, Stoke Poges, Burnham, or Farnham Royal) during restorations, or from the despoiled Abbey at Burnham.

Reference to Mr. Christopher Hohler's paper on medieval paving-tiles, and his lists in *Records of Bucks.*, vol. XIV, 1-49 and 99-132, have identified the tiles as being examples of the following types:

P/25 (seated rabbit or hare, with oak leaves, acorns, and trefoils);

P/26 (running hare with foliage and trefoils—portions of two specimens);

P/29 (nosing hound, with holly);

P/30 (running stag, with oak leaves, acorns and trefoils); and

P/99 (part of two circles, with dots, trefoils, and quatrefoils, probably four or more to a design).

P/25 has not been reported before south of Chilton and Notley; P/26 occurs in Bucks. only at Crendon, Cuddington, and Notley; P/29 and P/30 at Notley only in Bucks., though it is found in Berks. at Hurley Priory; P/99 has the same distribution of Chilton, Crendon, and Notley.

The tiles are the normal $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches square, but are unusually thick, some as much as $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

It is interesting that all except the circle tile are concerned with animals and the chase.

HARTWELL: *Condition of House and Church.* (a) Hartwell House is now once again in good order after the ravages of its occupation by the Army. The grand staircase, removed during the war, has been put back, and missing or damaged portions restored. (It is illustrated in the plate opposite page 192 in *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments*, Bucks., S., volume, and has been somewhat altered in the course of its replacement. It remains the finest early-seventeenth-century staircase in the county. The house is listed under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, and is also subject to a Deed of Declaration and Covenant under the Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act, 1938, between Mr. E. E. Cook and the County Council.

(b) Hartwell Church was referred to in these Notes on page 144 in the present volume. Since then things have gone from bad to worse; a great part of the roof and plaster vault has now collapsed, the building is badly cracked and fast becoming a dangerous ruin. There would appear to be no hope of saving this interesting structure of Henry Keene's, built between 1753 and 1756. Steps must, however, be taken to ensure the safety and proper disposal of the fittings—the font, the many wall tablets and memorials providing information about members of the Lee and other families, and the history of the building itself, the fine plaster Royal Arms, the service books, and the mutilated effigies from the earlier church.

HARLEYFORD MANOR: *Threat of demolition.* Another notable Buckinghamshire house, Harleyford Manor, is threatened with destruction. The owners have notified their intention to demolish, in spite of the building being listed by the Minister of Town and Country Planning in 1950. The County Council inspected the house and decided against making a preservation order. Action has been postponed until May 1952 in the hope of finding a purchaser prepared to preserve the house for some purpose. (The house was discussed by Mr. H. M. Colvin in his article on *The Architectural History of Marlow and its Neighbourhood*, on pp. 9 and 10, the Centenary Number, of the present volume of the *Records*. It is the only work of Sir Robert Taylor in Bucks., and was built in 1755.)

TYTHROP HOUSE: *Notable staircase preserved*. Colonel Crouch has kindly sent a copy of a letter from Lord Euston, Chairman of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, from which the following extract is taken: '... As you know, the house has been bought and essential repairs carried out, and it is once more in good structural repair. . . . I went to see the house . . . and it already looks entirely different. The staircase, I am glad to say, has survived quite undamaged. The plaster ceiling above it, which was about to fall on to it, has been properly secured and the roof is now quite sound again. I think that it was rescued at the last moment . . .' The importance of the staircase and plaster-work will be recalled from the late Mr. A. K. Wickham's account of the house on pages 272-5 of the present volume. The staircase is illustrated in plate 86 of Vol. 2 of Trevelyan's *Illustrated English Social History*. (Plate 5).

STONE AXE FROM WHITELEAF: Mrs. A. Young contributes the following note. While working in a garden in Whiteleaf village which abuts on the Upper Icknield Way, half of a stone axe was recovered in 1942 by Mr. White, who has kindly given permission for petrological examination of the specimen.

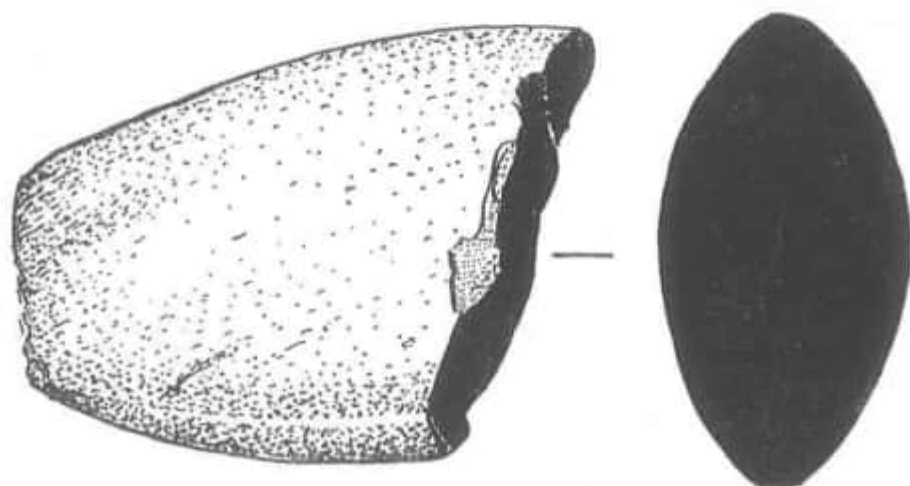


FIG. 4.—Stone Axe from Whiteleaf.

In his recent report on the work of the South-Western Stone Axe Committee, Dr. J. F. S. Stone commented on the characteristic shape of the axes in the Pike o' Stickle group to which the Whiteleaf specimen conforms. See fig. 4.

I am particularly indebted to Mrs. Morey for her identification of the axe fragment, quoted below.

Report by Mrs. J. E. Morey, Petrological Dept., Geological Survey and Museum, London:

ENQ. 1209. This specimen is a very fine-grained grey-green, banded tuff, with a conspicuous white patina on the weathered surface.

The rock is largely composed of brown-coloured glass and finely-divided pale green chlorite. In this ground mass are numerous small feldspar laths approximately 0.01 to 0.04 mm. long, also broken fragments. They are mainly of the composition of orthoclase, having straight extinction and fast elongation, but plagioclase is also present. Quartz probably occurs as broken fragments, but this cannot be proved. There are numerous small grains of honey-coloured epidote, about 0.012 mm. in diameter; there is also a little pyrite present, and chlorite occurs as inclusions within the orthoclase.

The banding appears to be due to streaks of darker coloured glass in which the feldspar laths tend to be orientated with their longer axes parallel to the direction of banding.

This specimen is very similar to the tuff from Pike o' Stickle, Westmorland, known as Group VI by the S.W. Museum's Petrological Sub-Committee classification.